



Turning and Tumbling: The Gloomings Samsara

Turning and burning and tumbling
 The Wheel of Death and Rebirth
 Ceases not and rumbles onwards
 As deluded souls forever cycle and circle
 Dear friends become foul foes
 Precious love turns into towering hate
 And former rivals become kinfolk

Driven by greed by lust and by hatred
 The karma for Hell and Ghost and Beastly
 Rebirth are thus wrought and brought about
 Stumbling and weeping and sighing
 Evil souls roam in penury and misery
 For eon after eon and life after life
 Crushed by sins with no end in sight

Then, before them, a breach, a ray of light!
 Human rebirth is begotten once more
 A chance, they say, is as rare as
 A palmful of soil placed next to all

The earth and the dirt of the world entire
Yet few are Sages while scores of souls
Drown amidst their own avarice

For every act there will be an echo
For every debt there is a date
And as the Samsara turns and tumbles
All and everyone shall have their due
For karmic deeds and debts and credits
Dating back to b'fore time immemorial
And so, as the Samsara wheels and whirls

Some become sheep and cattle of karmic foes
To repay deeds now rued with flesh and labor
Others are reborn as frivolous heirs
To spend riches stolen from them in lives prior
The Ancients say that to be man and wife
For but a day, is the fruit of a century
Of causes and conditions and karma

Lord Yama's lash is fierce and frightful
Karmic reckoning is rarely trifling
Yet men tread and trample upon the precepts
Murdering and masquerading as they plunder
Pining for profit during the day
Quaffing wine and vying for vice at night
They are sly even in their slumber

Alas! Such ingrates are thicker than granite
Fickle and foolish, they gloat over gluttony
Blind to karma and its comeuppance
They are rapacious rabble who crave for weal
While ignorant of the fact that only merit
Can enable their dreams to take wing
And that all woes are withered by patience

Heaping up sins higher than mountains
They squander their short human years

On desire and vanity and vainglory
And then they turn and tumble and slip
Back into the evil abyss of abject chastisement
Swapping their human bodies for
Gaunt ghostly forms and bestial hooves

As burning ambition paves the way to perdition
Stocks of merit are so often frittered away
By pompous pride and angry arrogance
By a lack of mercy and filial piety
By lies and insults and scathing sarcasm
And by lascivious pursuits that sully purity
Thus, the fortunes of men forever wax and wane

The wise bear slights with a serene smile
And forever hold onto the five precepts
Even in the face of envy, tempers and temptations
They are well aware of the follies of men
And seek not pomp, power or to lord over and reign
They ask only for peaceful lives of purpose
Of chastity and charity and piety

For they eschew vice and embrace virtue
Their burgeoning stocks of merit bring forth
Ascension to delightful new heights
Far above this dreary and weary world
To be gods and goddesses who glide beyond
The lush heavenly groves atop Meru Peak
And play ever pleasing tunes on divine lutes!

Once they are reborn as men and women
They are bright and beautiful and healthy
Wanting neither wealth nor influence
They prostrate and pray to the proper Dharma
And stroll in blooming blossoming orchards
Enjoying prose and poetry most moving
Amid sweet sounding harps and harpsichords

But, those climbing back to the realm of men
From the plunging depths of punishment
Are servile and must suffer scores of burdens
They toil and moil amid squalor and scarcity
Their previous miserliness manifest as poverty
Their slow wit the fruit of their slanders
And their short lifespans halved by their wrath!

Thus, the Samsara is dismal glooming darkness
Ruled by delusion and defined by pain
A place where souls stumble and tumble
As they stubbornly quest for the phantoms of
Fleeting love and glory, pomp and luxury
And suffer the karmic pains of their sins
Which they garner and gather as they hanker!

Therefore, why linger to burn and turn?
Why not seize the chance to urgently seek
Unsurpassed Bodhi through Amitabha's grace?
Forfeit attachments to the impermanent
Bring forth faith in his Forty Eight Vows
Resolve for rebirth in the Western Buddha-land
By being ever mindful of his noble name!

The Pure Land is resplendent without peer
Aptly lauded as the Land of Ultimate Bliss
From its aurulent soil arises bejeweled trees of
beryl berries, Cameo glass branches, and amber leaves
Surrounded by teal hued rivulets and pristine rivers
Adorned by Pavilions and Palaces most fair
And devoid of even the faintest hint of the fiendish

Thus, chant Amita's Buddha-name with
Faith and Resolve and Fortitude most resolute
Arise in the Lotus Lagoon as brilliant Bodhisattvas
Endowed with the 32 features of eminence
With infinite life and transcendental powers
Forever free from the sufferings of the Samsara!